

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6672
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5735

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, AR
SUBJECT: GOA REQUESTS US STATEMENT ON MALVINAS DISPUTE

REF: (A) STATE 183612 (B) BUENOS AIRES 3648

1. DURING JULY 21 CALL AT FOREIGN MINISTRY, ARGENTINE OFFICIALS REITERATED TO DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BARRY THEIR CONCERN WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S OMISSION OF THE MALVINAS DISPUTE FROM THE LIST OF HEMISPHERIC TERRITORIAL DISPUTES MENTIONED IN HIS JUNE 21 OASGA SPEECH. EMBOFF REPEATED EXPLANATION ALONG LINES REFTTEL A AND REPEATED US POSITION ON THE MALVINAS ISLANDS DISPUTE. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS ACCEPTED OUR EXPLANATION, BUT ASKED THAT, WHEN APPROPRIATE, THE US TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OFFICIALLY REMARK ON THE MALVINAS DISPUTE IN THE SAME CONTEXT AS OTHERS MENTIONED IN THE OAS SPEECH; I.E., THAT THE US IS INTERESTED IN FACILITATING A RAPID AND SATISFACTORY SOLUTION AMONG DISPUTING PARTIES.

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2. GIVEN EXTRAORDINARILY STRONG ARGENTINE SENSITIVITIES ON THIS POINT, AND LOCAL FEARS THAT THE US INTENDS TO PRESSURE GOA ON THE MALVINAS QUESTION AS PART OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS TACTICS, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT PRESS GUIDANCE BE ISSUED AT NEXT APPROPRIATE OCCASION, E.G. THE NEXT STEP IN BRITISH-ARGENTINE NEGOTIATIONS OR SOME OTHER INCIDENT RELATED TO THE DISPUTE.

THE GUIDANCE SHOULD REITERATE THAT THE US DOES NOT TAKE SIDES IN THE DISPUTE OVER THE MALVINAS (FALKLAND) ISLANDS BUT THAT IT ENCOURAGES THE DISPUTING PARTIES -- GREAT BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA -- TO CONTINUE THEIR ON-GOING EFFORTS TO FIND A RAPID, PEACEFUL AND SATISFACTORY SOLUTION.

3. FYI. THE LATEST ROUND OF ANGLO-ARGENTINE TALKS ON THE MALVINAS QUESTIONS ANTICIPATED FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 1978 WAS QUIETLY LEFT UNSCHEDULED BECAUSE OF CURRENT NEGATIVE PUBLIC OPINION IN ENGLAND. ACCORDING TO A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL, BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION IS ANNOYED BECAUSE OF RECENT REPORTS OF ARGENTINE SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY ON SOUTH THULE, AN ISLAND SPECK IN THE SANDWICH CHAIN CLAIMED BY BOTH BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA, AND THE ARGENTINE NAVY'S BOARDING OF POLISH FISHING SHIPS 60 MILES OFF THE MALVINAS ISLANDS SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. ONCE PUBLIC IRRITATION SUBSIDES, ENGLAND EXPECTS TO RESUME BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ISLANDS' FUTURE, PERHAPS BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR, THE BRITISH OFFICIAL SAID.

4. SECRETARY COULD APPROPRIATELY MAKE POINTS INCLUDED IN PARA 2 ABOVE IF BILATERAL TAKES PLACE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES AT UNGA.

5. EMBASSY BOGOTA: PLEASE PASS FOREGOING TO VISITING DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BARRY.
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